

Intervention: Teen Outreach Program

Finding: Sufficient evidence for effectiveness

Potential partners to undertake the intervention:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nonprofits or local coalitions | <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses or labor organizations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schools or universities | <input type="checkbox"/> Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health care providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Local public health departments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State public health departments | <input type="checkbox"/> Policymakers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitals, clinics or managed care organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Background on the intervention:

High school students were randomly assigned to either intervention or control group in each of 30 schools across the United States. Participants were mostly female, in grades 7-12; 50 percent were white, about one-third were African American, less than 10 percent were Hispanic.

This is a school-based, teen pregnancy and dropout prevention program consisting of weekly one-hour classroom sessions. The sessions integrate adolescence developmental tasks (lessons learned from 30 minutes each week of community service). The curriculum focuses on values, human growth and development, relationships, dealing with family, stress, and issues related to the social and emotional transition from adolescence to adulthood.

The program is recommended for high school youth at risk of pregnancy and academic problems. It is most effective with ethnic minority youth and adolescent mothers.

Findings from the systematic reviews:

Evaluations of the original program and of two replications found reduced rates of pregnancy, school suspension, and class failure among participants, compared to control and treatment youth. An evaluator writes, "It does not explicitly focus upon the problem behaviors it seeks to prevent, but rather seeks to enhance participants' competence in decision making, in interacting with peers and adults, and in recognizing and handling their own emotions."

Particularly in the field of teen pregnancy prevention, this broad focus has important practical implications. The program may be accepted in communities where programs that explicitly focus upon sexual behavior would not be accepted.

Additional information:

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References:

Alford, S. Science and Success: Sex education and other programs that work to prevent teen pregnancy, HIV and sexually transmitted infections; 2003. Available online at:
[Advocates for Youth - http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/ScienceSuccess.pdf](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/ScienceSuccess.pdf)